

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UR, US

SUBJECT:YARMOUTH ACADEMY BASKETBALL TEAM REQUEST FOR HELP

1. YARMOUTH ACADEMY BASKETBALL TEAM IS SCHEDULED TO TRAVEL TO THE SOVIET UNION APRIL 15-22 UNDER INTOURIST AUSPICES. THE GROUP CONSISTS OF 12 PLAYERS AT THE HIGH-SCHOOL LEVEL AND THE LEADER, EDWARD SHERMAN OF FINNAIR. SHERMAN, WHO INFORMED DEPARTMENT HE VISITED EMBASSY PREVIOUSLY IN CONNECTION WITH A GROUP OF YOUNG HOCKEY PLAYERS, HAS APPEALED FOR EMBASSY ASSISTANCE TO ELICIT SOVIET ARRANGEMENTS FOR BASKETBALL GAMES. - -

2. THE AMERICAN AMATEUR BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION (AABA) REQUESTED THAT THE SOVIET SPORTS COMMITTEE SCHEDULE ONE OR TWO BASKETBALL GAMES WITH ANY APPROPRIATE SOVIET GROUP FOR THE YARMOUTH TEAM. DESPITE EARLIER FAVORABLE SOVIET HINTS, THE TEAM RECEIVED WORD APRIL 12 THAT NO SUCH GAMES COULD BE SCHEDULED, DUE TO SOVIET TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.

3. THE YARMOUTH GROUP HAS TICKETS, VISAS AND INTOURIST
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ACCOMMODATIONS, BUT WOULD RATHER NOT GO MERELY FOR A TOUR. THEY WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO PLAY ONE OR TWO GAMES WITH ANY AVAILABLE TEAM OR GROUP OF SOVIET BASKETBALL PLAYERS. THE AABA HAS BEEN DEALING WITH MR. STAROVVOYTOV (PHONETIC) AT THE SPORTS COMMITTEE.

4. SHERMAN MAY BE ARRIVING IN MOSCOW ONE DAY EARLY (APRIL 15). THE GROUP'S ITINERARY IS: 4/16 - MOSCOW,

4/19 - LENINGRAD, 4/22 - DEPART FOR US.

5. SHERMAN WAS TOLD THERE IS PROBABLY VERY LITTLE THE EMBASSY CAN DO, BUT HE INDICATED HE PLANS TO CALL EMBASSY AFTER ARRIVAL, ASSUMING GROUP DECIDES TO GO AHEAD WITH TRIP. CANCELLATION IS STILL A POSSIBILITY AND ANY ADVICE EMBASSY MAY WISH TO PROVIDE BY COB 14 WOULD PROBABLY INFLUENCE DECISION. CHRISTOPHER

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